



## Wyoming Lender Alert

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Steven Despain, District Director

Making a Difference for Small Business in Wyoming

### SBA FY 2006 Budget

The U.S. Small Business Administration announced a fiscal year 2006 budget request of \$593 million that provides a record \$22 billion in loan authority for the agency's flagship lending programs.

On the technical assistance side, the budget requests \$88 million for Small Business Development Centers, \$12 million for Women's Business Centers and \$5 million for SCORE, Counselors to America's Small Businesses.

"The SBA's fiscally responsible FY 2006 request is good for small businesses and good for the American taxpayer," said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto. "From a lending perspective, it builds on our successes in the past year, when we reached more small businesses, including more women and minority entrepreneurs."

We also continue to strive to be efficient and innovative in our use of technology as we deliver financing, technical assistance, education and counseling and contracting programs to our clients."

As in FY 2005, the 7(a) loan guarantee program will be at a zero subsidy, meaning that the program is sustained entirely by modest fees paid by the lenders and borrowers, without requiring an appropriation of taxpayer funds.

Highlights of the proposed FY 2006 SBA budget include:

- \$16.5 billion in lending authority for the 7(a) loan guarantee program;
- \$5.5 billion in lending authority for the 504 Certified Development Company program with a zero subsidy;
- \$3 billion program level for the SBIC debenture program with a zero subsidy;
- \$810 million in lending authority for the Disaster Loan Program;
- \$1.3 million for the Office of Advocacy research;
- \$750,000 for National Women's Business Council;
- \$750,000 for Veteran's Outreach;
- \$1 million for the Drug Free Workplace Program.

### SBA Extends Deadline for Size Standards Comments

The U.S. Small Business Administration has extended the deadline by 60 days for advance comments from the General public on key issues relating to its small business size standards, the rules used by the SBA and other federal agencies to determine whether a business is small.

The SBA extended the deadline in response to requests from the

public. Many had asked the agency to allow more time to submit comments, given the importance of the issues affecting small businesses.

Last month, the SBA published a notice of the comment seeking process in *The Federal Register*. The notice and Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking did not propose any specific changes to the agency's size standards. However, before SBA considers a different approach to restructuring its size standards, it is seeking comments on a number of general issues that were raised by the public in response to the March 2004 proposed rule that as later withdrawn.

For more information, please read the advance notice at SBA's Size Standards Web site:

[www.sba.gov/size/anprm.html](http://www.sba.gov/size/anprm.html), or visit Federal eRulemaking Portal: [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).

Comments for this advanced notice were originally due by February 1, 2005. The new deadline has been extended to April 3, 2005.

Comments, which should be identified by the code RIN 3245-AF22, can be sent by the following methods: **Fax:** (202) 205-6390 or **E-mail:**

[restructure.sizestandards@sba.gov](mailto:restructure.sizestandards@sba.gov)

Include RIN 3245-AF22 in the subject line of the message.

## **Tips for Business Success**

Use as many outside resources as you can in charting the course for your company. You may be an expert on your company, but you do not know everything. Never be too proud to learn something from somebody else.

Observe what people do and how they do it, then evaluate their actions, and pick up on their good ideas. Discussions with people on topics that they know more about than you do help to broaden your business understanding.

You can learn from bankers, accountants, your outside board of directors and other respected business people. These people see many situations with many different companies and management teams. This gives them great insight to help you with your problems.

When you boil down the issues you have, and compare them with other companies you are dealing with, you find that most companies have the same problems. What is different is how the management teams of those companies solve their problems.

Getting insights from your respected advisors may help you find solutions that best solve your problem.

## **Watch out for Work-at-Home Scams**

The Natrona County Better Business Bureau (BBB) receives hundreds of calls monthly about work-at-home "opportunities." All too often the reports on companies that advertise on telephone poles, free weekly newspapers and the Internet are unsatisfactory.

If the consumer has already bought into the scheme, he/she rarely gets any money back. Callers

often ask if there are any legitimate work-at-home opportunities we know about. The answer is "yes!" A recent study by the National Foundation of Women Business Owners shows that there are 3.5 million home-based, women-owned businesses alone in the United States. Still work-at-home schemes number in the top ten reported scams every year in the United States.

Don't confuse work-at-home schemes with home-based business opportunities. Follow these tips:

- Know the most common work-at-home scams: Envelope stuffing, assembling crafts, chain letters, pyramid schemes, online "businesses" and medical insurance claim processing top the list.
- Know the red flags of a scam: Promises of huge profits, vague personal testimonials, a request for money up front before you understand the program, and claims that "no experience is necessary."
- Check it out before investing: Don't invest in any business if you can't verify whether they are legitimate or not.

Research and make a plan: There are many organizations that can help individuals start small businesses. One thing they all have in common is urging individuals to research the demand for the service or product, the competition, the costs and education or experience needed.

Legitimate Web sites and books on working from home do not mention envelope stuffing, draft assembly, chain letters or spamming as legitimate work. Legitimate work from home provides real services and often demands real skill and experience as well as discipline and organizational abilities.

If you are sincere about working from home, do some research at your public library and local

bookstores. Also visit the following Web sites:

- [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov) – The Small Business Administration
- [www.hoaa.com](http://www.hoaa.com) – The Home Office Association of America.

Shop smart by checking with the Natrona County BBB first. Call (800) 564-0371 or visit [www.mountainstates.bbb.org](http://www.mountainstates.bbb.org).



## **April 26-28, 2005 Washington, DC**

Be a part of the U.S. Small Business Administration's Expo '05: Celebrating National Small Business Week.

This special event, taking place in **Washington, DC, April 26-28**, provides an exceptional opportunity to join forces with business leaders from around the country, network and celebrate the tremendous contributions made by America's small businesses to our nation's economy.

Come and learn about cutting-edge business practices, find out what is hot in business trends, meet government officials, and talk with decision-makers who help shape the economy.

## **Conference Highlights**

### *Business Matchmaking*

A unique opportunity for small businesses to meet one-on-one with federal and corporate buyers to explore procurement options.

### *EXPO Floor*

More than 180 exhibitors from the public and private sectors will provide information and offer opportunities to network.

### *Business Sessions*

A superb lineup of educational seminars featuring expert panelists discussing the latest developments

and best practices in the world of business and entrepreneurship.

#### *Town Hall*

Tackle the pressing issues facing entrepreneurs today; talk to the SBA Administrator and other special guests; ask questions and talk about what is on your mind.

### **SBA Launches New Faith-Based And Community Initiatives Center**

The U.S. Small Business Administration has created a Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to help non-profit, grassroots organizations learn about and access SBA-backed programs and loans.

As part of the initiative, all current technical assistance grant recipients – including SCORE, Women’s Business Centers, and Small Business Development Centers – have extended their programs to faith-based and other non-profit organizations that focus a significant portion of their activities on aiding small businesses.

The Center is part of the SBA’s implementation of the President’s Faith-Based and Community Initiative, which supports the compassionate efforts of faith-based and secular grassroots organizations to improve their communities. The initiative is designed to open government programs to these organizations by ensuring that grassroots leaders can compete on equal footing for federal dollars, receive greater private support and face fewer bureaucratic barriers.

“By working more closely with faith-based and other organizations, we can advance the President’s goal of bringing jobs and hope to economically distressed communities all across our nation,” said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto.

SBA field representatives are already developing workshops, training seminars and open houses to reach out and educate faith-based and community organizations about SBA programs and to ensure that these groups have equal access to the services.

For more information on the SBA’s Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, go to the SBA’s Web site at [www.sba.gov/fbci](http://www.sba.gov/fbci), or contact the SBA district office in your area.

### **GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT WORKSHOP**

The 2005 Opportunities for Small Business Conference will be held on March 15, 2005 from 8:30am until 4:30pm at the Inn at Lander. This is a workshop for all interested small businesses in Wyoming and adjoining states. The purpose of the program is to provide information to businesses concerning the opportunities of selling to the government and how the process works.

At least twenty government agencies will be represented at the event, including agencies from Department of Agriculture, Department of Interior, Veteran’s Administration, General Services Administration, Department of Defense, and the State of Wyoming. The agency procurement staff will be available for one-on-one discussions with the business representatives.

The conference is presented in conjunction with the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Native American Business Expo which will be held on March 16<sup>th</sup> in Ft. Washakie.

The federal government is the largest buyer of goods and services in the world. It is the purpose of this conference to inform small business concerns about government procurement, and to ensure that contracts do not bypass these small

firms because they do not know or understand the process.

The information obtained should serve to open up contracting opportunities with the Federal and State Government.

For information on how to register for the 2005 Opportunities for Small Business Conference please contact Lisa Wagner, Wind River Development Fund 307-335-7330 or Jeff Sneddon, U.S. Small Business Administration 307-261-6515.

### **DID YOU KNOW**



The National Guaranty Purchase Center (NGPC) in Herndon, VA has a new web site? Go to [www.sba.gov/banking/npgc](http://www.sba.gov/banking/npgc) to see everything it has to offer. Some of its links will take you to the Forms Library, Guaranty Purchase Information and Purchase and Liquidation forms.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**March 1** – Women’s Roundtable, Jackson

**March 2** – Women’s Roundtable, Casper

**March 10** – Women’s Roundtable, Laramie

**March 15** – Procurement Conference, Lander

**March 15** – Women’s Roundtable, Cody

**March 17** – Women’s Roundtable, Powell

**March 25** - Business Expo – Buffalo

**March 29** – WNET Call

### **SBA HOME PAGE**

[www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

### **SBA’s CUSTOMIZED SITE FOR WYOMING**

[www.sba.gov/wy](http://www.sba.gov/wy)